



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas, 18th District
Vice-Chair, Finance & Audit Committee

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE SENDS JOBS & TAX DOLLARS TO OTHER COUNTIES, STATES

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas released the following statement regarding unemployment in Milwaukee County:

“As many Milwaukee County residents struggle to find jobs, County Executive Scott Walker continues to send legitimate County jobs to other counties and other states. In these tough economic times, the County Executive should not export our tax dollars to other states. His recent order to lay off experienced security staff in County facilities sent these jobs to an out-of state-firm, Wackenhut. This robs our residents of economic opportunities and sends tax dollars out of Milwaukee County and Wisconsin. Wackenhut has already brought in guards from Chicago and as far away as Florida to replace the previous employees, who were Milwaukee County residents.

“To preserve jobs and make more of them available to local residents, Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb and I have authored legislation that gives preference to contractors who employ workers living in Milwaukee County. Last week, the County Board overwhelmingly approved our resolution, because we must make jobs more available to local residents. Our first preference for County tax dollars is supporting local businesses, contractors and employees. This ensures Milwaukee County workers will get the lion’s share of jobs that they qualify to perform.

“The County Executive’s decision to use Wackenhut is particularly troubling. So far, in the few weeks since Wackenhut took over, a guard has already been removed after a background check revealed a felony conviction and outstanding domestic violence charge. Wackenhut also drew fire locally for its handling of security on the Milwaukee County Transit System. Wackenhut management initially agreed that security personnel would spend 85% of their time riding MCTS buses. In reality, they only achieved 3%. After an audit exposed this failure and sparked public outcry, Wackenhut finally placed more guards on buses.

“The outsourcing of security jobs is just one example. County Executive Walker has compounded, rather than addressed, the unemployment problem facing Milwaukee County. Shipping out-of-state workers to Milwaukee County while our residents are looking for work is the wrong call. This raises serious questions about his judgment. Meanwhile, while Scott Walker is out campaigning and trawling for large donors, our residents suffer. If he cannot secure jobs for our citizens at the County level, where he was elected to serve, it doesn’t bode well if he is elected to higher office.”

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